

Joutes oratoires lycéennes

Guide



Table of contents

The competition in a few words	p.3
Organisation of the competition	p.4
Map of the current regional heats	p.5
Regional coordinator contacts	p.6
Rules of the competition	p.7
Advice to participants	p.8
The National Finals	p.9
Examples of motions	p.10

The competition in a few words...

The *Joutes oratoires lycéennes* is a French debating competition open to all sixth formers (or equivalent) in the United Kingdom which gathers every year several hundreds of young French learners, all sharing the same interest in practicing languages in a creative and challenging way. Since its creation in 2007, hundreds of students with a shared interest in the creative and demanding practice of foreign languages have taken part in this not-to-be missed event for young French learners.

Regional heats are organised across the United Kingdom to identify regional winners. The national final is organised at the Institut français du Royaume-Uni in London during the International Francophonie Month (March) and bring several months of regional heats to a close.

What a great way to enhance one's capacity of critical thinking as well as one's knowledge and understanding of the French-speaking world!

A little background

The *Joutes oratoires lycéennes* began as regional competitions organised by a few French teachers. In 2007, the first London-wide competition was held, bringing together several schools.

The competition was then extended to other geographic areas, and in 2009, the national final of the *Joutes oratoires lycéennes* was held at the Institut français du Royaume-Uni for the first time.

Why should your school participate?

Participating in the *Joutes oratoires lycéennes* enables students to gain confidence in speaking French and to address current and captivating topics such as the environment, the Francophone world, etc. Participants learn to develop control of the language system and build coherent arguments, directly in French, interacting with their fellow contestants on the spot. They will also engage with French on a more daily basis, listening to the radio and coming up with idioms used by French speakers. In other words, they will become familiar with this language and have fun with it!

The competition is also excellent preparation for their examinations: vocabulary review, pronunciation, active listening, improvisation, etc.

Organisation of the competition

The course of a debate

A team is made up of two students. During the regional heats, teams from the same geographical area compete against each other. Teams debate on two or three motions communicated in advance by their regional coordinator.

To spice things up, during the competition, the participants must always be ready to debate FOR and AGAINST each motion. On the big day, and for each debate, the students won't know until the last minute whether they are debating in favour (defending the motion) or against (opposing the motion) the motion.

Here is the classic outline of a debate (about 15 min) which more or less follows the English rules of debate as defined by the English Debating Association:

- 2 min for the first speaker in favour of the motion (team 1).
- 2 min for the first speaker against the motion (team 2).
- 2 min for the second speaker in favour of the motion (team 1).
- 2 min for the second speaker against the motion (team 2).
- 4 min of "strife" (moment when both teams can question the position of their opponents).
- 1 min of conclusion for the team against the motion (team 2).
- 1 min of conclusion for the team in favour of the motion (team 1).

Schedule

1/ September - October : contact with the regional coordinators via l'Institut français du Royaume-Uni (via the [Institut's website](https://www.institut-francais.org.uk) and/or education@institut-francais.org.uk)

2/ November - February : organisation of the regional heats

3/ March : national final of the *Joutes oratoires lycéennes* at the Institut français in London

Map of the current regional heats



Regional coordinator contacts

Who to contact?

If you have questions relating to the preparation of your students, if you want advice, or you want to learn how to organise your own regional competition, contact H  l  ne May (St Paul's Girls' School): Helene.May@spgs.org

To be put in contact with other regional coordinators, to ask questions related to the organisation of the competition, and to start your own regional competition, contact the Institut fran  ais du Royaume-Uni: education@institut-francais.org.uk

Please find below a list of the regional coordinators of the 2024 *Joutes*:

Area	School	Teacher
North London Buckinghamshire	Haberdashers' Girls' School	Carole Janin
South London	Whitgift school	Julia Barrat
Central London	St Paul's Girls' School	H��l��ne May
Cambridge area / the East	Perse Upper School	Jess Moore
Yorkshire / North-East	St Peter's, York	Lauren Houldridge
The West	Marlborough College	Tom Kiggell
Manchester area	Cheadle Hulme School	Oliver Abbott
Wales	Cardiff Sixth Form College	Ariane Laumonier
South East / South Central	Charterhouse	Nicholas Budden
Midlands/West Midlands	Repton School	Ga��lle Deram & Ben Page

Rules of the competition

Rules

- Speakers stand up to speak (except during the strife).
- You must not interrupt an opponent during their 2 protected minutes, or during the conclusion.
- You must stay courteous to your opponents.
- You can use your notes to help you, but you should not read out extracts that have been entirely written down.
- You may take notes during the debate.

Judging criteria

- Clarity, organisation, variety, and quality of arguments.
- Ability to express yourself orally, fluency, and spontaneity.
- Ability to react to the opposing team's argument and respond convincingly.
- Attitude during the strife (who leads the debate? enthusiasm for the cause, ability to convince, etc.).
- Clarity and quality of French (richness and precision of vocabulary; grammatical accuracy; accent; idiomatic expressions; complexity of structures).
- Team performance (balanced or unbalanced; interaction between teammates).

Advice to participants

APPROACH

Speak clearly and do not read your notes. Simply use your notes as a reminder and make good eye contact with your opponent and the judges. Respect the allotted time.

CONTENT

Have 3 to 4 strong arguments for each member of the team. Arguments must be detailed and supported by facts and evidence (statistics, surveys, opinions polls, etc.).

FORM

In your speeches, try to adopt as many different speech styles as possible (rhetorical questions, humour, puns, etc.). This will make your speeches more varied, more interesting to listen to and therefore more effective.

WHEN THE OPPOSITION SPEAKS

Make sure you take notes so you can pick up on their arguments later, especially during the strife.

THE STRIFE

The Strife is the occasion to challenge your opponent's arguments and to present yours as more valid. Try to have one or two new arguments to put forward. However, when the opposing team asks you a question, make sure you answer it correctly and thoroughly before presenting your own point of view.

THE CONCLUSION

The rule is to be brief and to the point. Do not repeat all the arguments discussed previously. Choose only one or two key arguments. If possible, broaden the perspective of the debate.



National finals

The finals of the *Joutes oratoires lycéennes* take place at the Institut français du Royaume-Uni (17 Queensberry Place, SW7 2DT, London), in March, during the International Francophonie Month. The finals include two phases: the qualifying rounds & the final debates.

Qualifying rounds

Depending on the number of teams present, two or three debates take place simultaneously in different rooms. Panels of at least two judges preside over the qualifying rounds. Each team takes part in two debates. If a team has to debate three times, only its two best results are taken into account.

The motions that will be debated during the qualifying rounds are known by the teams, the qualifying rounds therefore require no preparation time. Before each debate, the jury announces which of the two teams will be defending the motion or opposing it: the students are therefore prepared to support both positions.

Final debates

After the jury's deliberation, the 4 best teams are identified as well as two "coup de coeur" prizes. Two teams will compete in the *petite finale* (third place on the podium), while the two best teams will compete in the *grande finale* (first and second place).

The 4 finalist teams are given surprise motions. It is also decided at random which of the teams will defend the motion or oppose it. Each team then has 15 minutes to prepare their arguments.

The final debates are held in the same way as the qualifying rounds.

Examples of motions

- ~ La lutte anti-terroriste justifie l'intervention militaire à l'étranger
 - ~ L'Europe doit mettre en place une armée commune
 - ~ Les statues de Napoléon devraient être déboulonnées
- ~ Les anciennes puissances coloniales doivent restituer les œuvres d'art qu'elles ont acquises pendant la colonisation
 - ~ Les artistes devraient recevoir un revenu minimum de l'Etat
- ~ Il faudrait interdire la vente de produits en plastique à usage unique
 - ~ Le nucléaire est une énergie d'avenir
 - ~ "Si tu veux la paix, prépare la guerre."
 - ~ On devrait légaliser les drogues douces
 - ~ L'Art/la Littérature ne sert plus à rien
- ~ Les contes de fées sont mauvais pour les enfants
- ~ L'intelligence artificielle est une menace pour l'homme
- ~ Les hommes et les femmes ne seront jamais égaux
 - ~ La démocratie n'existe pas
 - ~ La liberté de la presse est une illusion
 - ~ L'écoterrorisme est justifié
 - ~ La vente de tabac devrait être interdite
- ~ Il faudrait imposer la parité au gouvernement
 - ~ Les religions ne servent à rien de nos jours
- ~ Il ne devrait pas y avoir de limite à la liberté d'expression